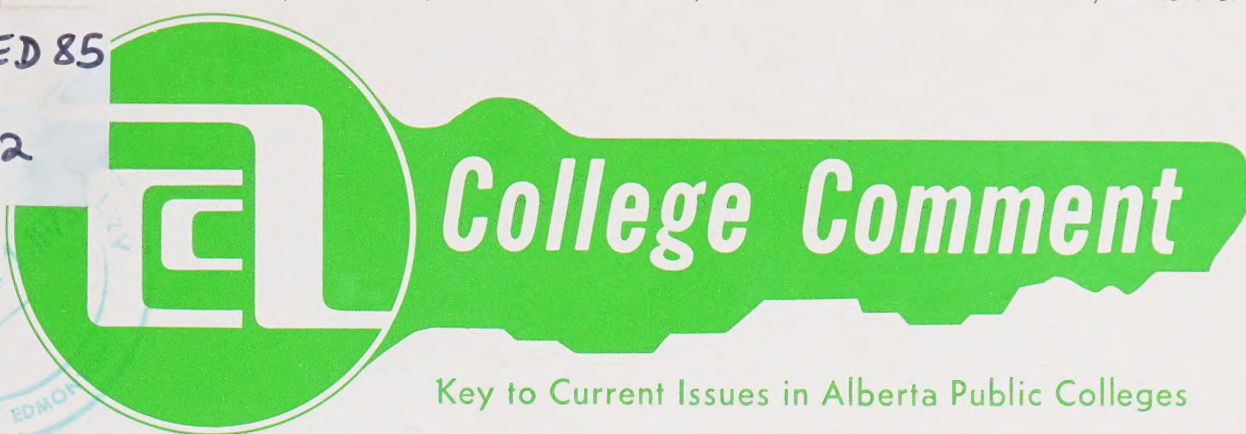


CA2ALED 85

C51

Vol. 1, #2



Key to Current Issues in Alberta Public Colleges

A NEW DIMENSION ADDED

At its April 8, 1971 meeting, the Alberta Colleges Commission approved the establishment of a Planning Branch to be concerned primarily with both short-range and long-range master planning for the Alberta College System.

R. A. Bosetti, who has served with the Commission as executive assistant and Chairman of the Planning Steering Committee, was appointed as Director of Planning. Mr. Bosetti assumed his new duties as an executive officer of the Commission on May 1, 1971.

In the broadest sense, the purposes of the Planning Branch will be to contribute to:

- (1) Ensuring adequate accessibility, opportunity, and supply of educational services to meet the existing and future interests and needs of society, manpower, and individual clients at the post-secondary, non-university, and continuing education level.
- (2) Ensuring the orderly growth and development of this level of education with optimum use of resources.
- (3) Creating a unified system of education which is both efficient and effective in meeting the needs of society, manpower, and individuals.

The general functions of the Planning Branch are related to identifying needs and proposing alternatives for the coordination, growth and development of the College System. Its specific functions are as follows:

1. **Coordination.** The planning branch is responsible for the collection and analysis of data and statistics reflecting societal, manpower, and individual educational needs which may be fulfilled by the college system. The planning branch is also responsible for coordinating the collection and analysis of data relative to:

- (a) existing programs and services.
- (b) availability and use of facilities.
- (c) financial resources being expended.

Since these data are required both for planning and for decisions which properly fall within the jurisdiction of other branches, the planning branch is required to fulfil a service function to these other branches.

2. **Decisions.** Since the planning branch, by definition, is concerned with the functional aspects of planning, it has a limited decision-making function. Its prime responsibility is to identify alternatives and to provide an analysis of the implications of each identified alternative.

3. **Master Planning.** The planning branch is responsible for developing system master plans which take into account:

- (a) programs and services required to fulfil identified societal, manpower and individual educational needs.
- (b) facilities required to implement necessary programs and services.
- (c) Financial resources required for capital development.
- (d) Financial resources required for the operation of identified programs and services.

In addition to developing system master plans, the planning branch will be responsible for developing a planning-evaluation model which will serve to accommodate new needs and developments. This model should serve as a planning tool which enables master planning to operate on a continuous basis with each year's experience being used to correct and modify plans for succeeding years.

4. **Alternatives, Implications, and Cross-Impacts.** The planning branch is responsible for the identification of viable alternatives for the provision of educational services, facilities, and financial support. In addition, this branch is responsible for identifying the implications of each alternative in terms of its cross-impact on other decisions made by educational authorities.

This aspect of the branch's work will require close communication with government, existing systems, and other planning agencies.

5. **Research and Innovations.** The planning branch is responsible for investigating current research relative to post-secondary non-university education. The branch is also responsible for conducting and/or coordinating research activities directly related to planning.

This branch is also responsible for assessing the feasibility of innovations in the programming and operation of post-secondary non-university systems and institutions.

6. **System Evaluation.** The planning branch is responsible for developing appropriate evaluative techniques with which to monitor the system and with which to monitor the effectiveness of the master plans.

COLLEGES IN WESTERN EUROPE

In June and July of 1970 R. G. Fast, the Alberta Colleges Commission's Director of Instructional Services, together with thirty educators from the United States joined a Western European College study tour sponsored by The Southern Illinois University. The purpose of the tour was to enable participants to become familiar with non-university post-secondary education in Western Europe. Dr. Fast visited a total of twenty-six institutions or organizations in ten countries, and held formal discussions with thirty-seven European educators. In addition he met informally with students, teachers, and people of many communities.

The findings of this study are presented in a report entitled **Some Perceptions of Education in Western Europe**. The first two chapters present the historical setting and discuss some generalizations on Western European Education. Chapter III describes briefly the types of institutions providing non-university post-secondary education in Europe, and makes references to students and teachers. The last chapter identifies nine trends developing in European education and presents their implications for Canadian institutions.

A.A.C.A. - A.A.C.F. CONVENTION

The Alberta Association of Colleges Administration and the Association of Alberta College Faculties co-hosted their fourth annual convention on May 6-8 at Grande Prairie.

Approximately 100 delegates registered at the Grande Prairie Regional College Thursday evening and the following morning for two days of business sessions during which they examined educational goals and organization within the College System. In a near gale on Saturday afternoon the Honorable Robert C. Clark turned the first sod marking the official beginning of construction of a permanent campus for the Grande Prairie Regional College.

The meetings were opened Friday morning with music by the Grande Prairie College Community Orchestra followed by welcoming addresses by Gerald Baldwin, M.P. for Peace River, E. W. Martin, Chairman of the Board of Governors, and Dr. H. N. Anderson, President of Grande Prairie Regional College.

Professor Gordon Campbell of the University of Lethbridge gave the keynote address, "Alberta Colleges and National Perspectives." The issues were later debated by members of a panel and in an open forum.

Professor Gordon Campbell challenged the delegates "to act courageously and imaginatively" in designing new institutional forms to meet the needs in post-secondary education. Not only must the colleges function as institutions to educate the young who are not served by the universities, but they must provide lifelong opportunities in education for all citizens. Colleges must be prepared to do more than transmit the tried and tested knowledge to a new generation of culture bearers; they must pioneer new frontiers in the developing culture. The new frontier is one of time rather than of geography. In our dynamic world there is unprecedented change. The rapidity of technological change is one factor; the character of cultural change from a commercial to "a person-centered culture" is more significant for the youth of today.

In discussing the role of an institution in a person-centered culture which emphasizes personal freedom, Professor Campbell observed that on a national scale there are external influences on Canadian culture from American capital and American ideas. There are internal divisive factors of provincial autonomy and the two nation concept. These add to the complexity in determining what culture is to be transmitted and what cultural "form and substance" is to be developed.

In addition, Professor Campbell observed that colleges face practical problems of organization, finance and efficiency. He saw a need for some balance to be struck in federal government responsibility, provincial government participation and local initiative. Whatever the resolution of the balance, Professor Campbell concluded that there is a real need for colleges to offer "comprehensive and varied programming" at a low cost to the disadvantaged student "where he is" and "in his terms."

Dr. H. Kolesar, Chairman of the Alberta Colleges Commission, began the Saturday morning session by presenting a paper "College Governance; Implications of the Commission System." Dr. Kolesar examined the reasons for establishing a coordinating agency in Alberta, some alternative methods developed elsewhere, the success of the Commission to date, and issues

of continuing interest. Further consideration was given to these issues during the subsequent panel discussion and open forum.

Dr. Kolesar stated that in Alberta, as in other provinces and states, the legislative body has an interest in "the way that resources are used to achieve certain mutually accepted goals." Therefore someone, whether the legislature, the cabinet, or a single civil servant, is responsible for assuring that resources are "secured, allocated and directed" toward providing and coordinating the services required.

The Alberta Colleges Commission "assumes an intermediary role" between the college system and the government. There is a dichotomy in the way in which the institutions perceive the central authority; the authority is "at the same time a threat to their autonomy and source of support for their institution." "In fact," Dr. Kolesar said, "some compromises and trade-offs occur until a satisfactory equilibrium is achieved."

Dr. Kolesar saw one important area of continuing concern in the extent to which overall system coordination is advisable. There is diversity in the college system, and there are provincially-owned institutions as well as privately supported post-secondary programs outside the college and university structures. In order to assess the achievements of post-secondary education in the provincial and in the national interest, the total effort must be taken into consideration.

Dr. Kolesar said that attention must be given to what we mean by an open-door admissions policy. Not only must social and economic barriers be removed for youth and for adults, but attention must be given to the employability of the graduates. In addition, to achieve maximum effectiveness, attention must be given to flexibility in operation and instruction.

The Commission system in Alberta is one form of coordinating body which has faced some of the issues in a developing program for post-secondary education, and which is aware of other areas requiring consideration.

Ten symposia sessions held on Saturday permitted deliberation on a broad range of topics of interest to the delegates. Discussions on college organization and governance, professional development and audio-tutorial instruction were chaired by Hugh MacLeod and B. Baptie of Mount Royal, Dr. M. Eastman and Dr. Jon Thorhallson of Red Deer, Dr. F. Kozar of Grande Prairie, Dr. Milton Fenske of the Colleges Commission, Dr. R. Bryce of the University of Alberta, and J. E. Birdsall of Olds.

Mr. A. Strynadka chaired the symposium considering "Community College Responsibility for Native Education"; he said that it was important that the native people first be given an awareness of and a pride in their culture. The preliminary education therefore should be available in the home community, and only after this should the students be enrolled in the general college.

On Friday, many delegates took advantage of a conducted tour of the North Canadian Forest Industries plant before leaving for a barbecue at Saskatoon Lake Provincial Park. Business sessions for the A.A.C.A. and A.A.C.F. were held prior to the round-up dinner and dance on Saturday.

What was accomplished in the short fifty-two hours? There was good fellowship, stimulation and challenge.

— Irene Hutton
Grande Prairie College

STUDENT VIEWS



The Alberta Colleges Commission has undertaken a survey of college students' perceptions regarding the general problems and areas of concern which exist among students, and to learn what solutions students themselves would propose. Dr. Henry Kolesar, Chairman of the Commission, has observed that "although we as administrators may have our own ideas as to what problems are encountered by students, if we really want to know what students' problems are, it would be much more desirable to examine student perceptions rather than to depend upon our own."

Since the Colleges Commission permits individual colleges as much operational autonomy as possible, regular contact is restricted mainly to meetings between the Commission staff and college administrators. Consequently, Mr. Neil Clarke, intern with the Colleges Commission staff and doctoral student in Educational Administration at the University of Alberta, was named to interview students in the five colleges in the Province.

The first phase of Mr. Clarke's project was a one-day seminar in Edmonton involving representatives from the students' councils at the five colleges and the Colleges Commission staff. The seminar provided a relaxed setting in which student presidents could judge for themselves the extent to which the Commission staff is approachable. Students' Council presidents and Commission staff discussed student disinterest, liaison and communications, the conflict between education based on manpower needs and education based on social demand, student involvement in council activities, non-Canadian influence, information dissemination to potential students, counselling services, and continuity in student councils. Walter Borle, Grande Prairie; Ernie Koz, Medicine Hat; Skip DeCoste and Lorne Begin, Lethbridge; Dale Mitchell, Mount Royal (Calgary); and Greg Morrison, Red Deer, expressed that progress had been made in establishing relations between the Colleges Commission and students' councils.

Although Clarke's final report will not be completed until May of this year, the following interim findings are indicative of some of the problems which the study will identify:

- Students reported that student-instructor relations in colleges are generally excellent.

- Both university transfer students and diploma students were very concerned about transferability from community colleges to other educational institutions. Related to the problem of university transferability was the suggestion that the non-university post-secondary institutions should keep their own houses in order. Before insisting that universities give broader recognition to transferring college students, colleges (as well as the institutes of technology and the agricultural colleges) should assure that workable transferability and accreditation arrangements exist among themselves.

- Most students mentioned "apathy" — or at least lack of interest — among students regarding both the affairs of the students themselves, and the decisions by college administrators which affect students. However, many did not regard apathy as a problem. Rather, they regarded it as a fact of life arising from students placing top priority on obtaining an education. Nevertheless, a significant number in each of the colleges saw lack of student identification with the college as an undermining influence regardless of priorities.

- Students in diploma programs were concerned that the diploma they will receive (a) is not recognized by potential employers in the community, and (b) does not represent a program which was planned on the basis of information about job requirements from potential employers. These students saw a dire need for greatly improved public relations with the community in order to "sell" the diplomas and in order to solicit from potential employers recommendations with respect to program planning.

- In contrast to the above, another group of students — not all university transfer students — desired education for education's sake. They wanted more freedom to choose courses and a greater number of courses from which to choose.

- Almost without exception, Manpower students were concerned over an apparent lack of identifiable and uniform criteria by which applicants were selected to be supported, and by which the duration of support was determined.

- Most students mentioned educational and residential facilities; however, they generally were aware that although new campuses would alleviate many problems, they could not be expected to be the panacea for all student problems. Many students expressed the shortage (or high cost) of living accommodations as a problem, particularly in the smaller cities.

- Most students were very concerned by the failure of college counselling services to research and make available information on program requirements in their own colleges and in other institutions, and information on job availability.

The study was intended to identify student-perceived problem areas within a college or throughout the provincial system in order that the Alberta Colleges Commission in conjunction with college administrators may find an improved basis for establishing methods and priorities for resolving student problems.

The emphasis was on selecting those student responses which seemed to identify areas of **general** concern to students.

Without exception, students were cooperative and frank. Valuable assistance was given also by administrators and instructors during the visits to colleges. Although the interviews were open-ended, students praised as well as criticized; and they were often constructive in their criticism.

Copies of the final report will be distributed as widely as is feasible on approximately May 30, 1971. Requests may be addressed to COLLEGE COMMENT.

GRANT MacEWAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Grant MacEwan Community College, the sixth community college to be established in Alberta, will begin offering programs of study in the fall of 1971 at several locations in the City of Edmonton. The college is committed to offer educational services which are not normally available at the universities and technical schools in the Province.

Three years ago, in the Fall of 1968, a committee was established by the Government of Alberta to study the possible need for a community college in Edmonton. The chairmanship of this committee was accorded to Walter Neal, Vice-President—Planning and Development at the University of Alberta, then Professor of Educational Administration. A recommendation in April 1969 that such a college be established, reflected a need in the community for a broader educational base together with easier re-entry into the educational system, and a new kind of educational thinking combining general education and sub-professional skills.

A Board of Governors was appointed, and has been responsible, up to this time, for planning. Members of the Board include Mr. Barry Moore—Chairman, Mr. J. L. Haar who was appointed President of the college in October 1970, Mrs. Win Ferguson of Fort Saskatchewan, Mr. Robert Guebert of Leduc, Mr. Fred Kurylo and Mr. Edward Stack of Edmonton. Two other appointments are still to be made, one representing the college's faculty, and the other, the college's student body.

The college will operate on a trimester basis, which means that students will be admitted to the college three times a year, in September, January and May. Each trimester will have self-contained courses of fifteen weeks duration. Normally, admission will be granted on the basis of an Alberta Grade XII High School Diploma, and through the "open-door" policy which permits students who are 18 years of age or over to continue their education as "mature" students.

The majority of offerings are based on two-year diploma programs which require four trimesters to complete. Students may choose to interrupt their program of study at the end of any trimester. The pattern of attendance is left to the student's choice; however, a two-year diploma must be completed within a four-year period.

The following programs will be offered through the Divisions indicated:

A. Academic Division

General Arts and Science which will include courses in Canadian Studies, the Humanities and Sciences.

B. Applied Arts Division

1. Child Care Worker.
2. Fashion Sales Technician.
3. Library Technician.
4. Communication Arts.

C. Business Division.

1. Secretarial Sciences related to the following:
 - a. Executive Secretary.
 - b. Legal Secretary.
 - c. Medical Secretary.
 - d. Scientific Secretary.
 - e. Bilingual Secretary.

2. Business Administration—with majors in:
 - a. Administration and Organization.
 - b. Accounting and Auditing.
 - c. Marketing and Sales.
 - d. Public Administration.

D. Applied Science Division

1. Medical Equipment Technician.
2. Psychotechnician (Behavioral Sciences).

E. Continuing Education Division

1. Community Development.
2. Night Classes.
3. Short courses in subjects to be determined according to the demands of the community.

Programs, in addition to those listed above, will be developed in the next few months, and will be publicized through the news media.

An initial enrolment of 600 students is expected for the Fall of 1971. A rapid growth towards an enrolment of 5,000 students is predicted, with a maximum of some 10,000 students within 10 years of the college opening. Approximately 500 inquiries seeking program information, calendars and application forms have been received to date.

Classes for the Fall trimester will commence on September 7, 1971, and registration days are on September 1-3.

ALTERNATIVE FUTURES

Dr. Fran Thiemann, formerly Associate Professor of Educational Administration at the University of Alberta, has submitted to the Alberta Colleges Commission a position paper suggesting alternative patterns for organizing Alberta's post-secondary educational system.

The paper, entitled "Alternative Patterns for Governance for the Alberta Post-Secondary Educational System" is the first in a series of papers and research studies commissioned by the Alberta Colleges Commission for the purpose of securing opinions and data to be used in developing a master plan for post-secondary, non-university and continuing education in the Province of Alberta.

Following its publication and distribution, this paper will form one of the bases for discussion by a Futures Committee which will be assigned responsibility for proposing viable alternatives for the coordination, growth and development of the system. Other inputs to this committee will be drawn from the Commission on Educational Planning as well as from the ideas and opinions of individual committee members. These alternatives along with specific recommendations will be submitted to the Alberta Colleges Commission and to the Minister of Education for final consideration.

Dr. Thiemann, who is now Associate Professor of Educational Administration and Research Associate at the Center for the Advanced Study of Educational Administration at the University of Oregon, has agreed to defend his position paper before the Futures Committee in early October, 1971.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Legislative Assembly of Alberta - Alberta Legislature Library

